

Darlington Parliamentary Constituency

This is the second bulletin of 2013 produced by Northern Housing Consortium (NHC) providing analysis of housing-related data for the Parliamentary Constituencies in the North of England. The report provides analysis of the impacts of welfare reform and the housing market in the constituency.

We have used the following symbols to indicate your performance against the relevant regional or national statistics.



Above average



Reference point



Below average

Welfare Reform



[Real Life Reform](#) report is the result of a partnership between Northern Housing Consortium, seven registered providers and York University. Some findings emerging from the first report are that 65% of households have less than £10 per week to live on following rent and essentials such as food and bills. 83% of households are in debt (average £2,418). Households are reporting increased levels of stress and depression.



The Trussell Trust's latest figures show that more people are being referred to foodbanks with Benefit related problems since April's welfare reforms. Between April and June, over 150,000 people received three days' emergency food from a Trussell Trust foodbank - 200% more than the same period in 2012. The nearest foodbanks to the constituency are in Middlesbrough or Billingham.



The number of Housing Benefit claimants in the social sector has fallen in the constituency since the implementation of the under-occupation penalty. Such claims fell by 1.4% between March and May this year. Meanwhile, claims of Local Housing Allowance in the private sector fell by 0.9% in the same period compared with a Tees Valley average increase of 1.1%.



While the average Housing Benefit award grew by 0.7%, the average weekly LHA award grew by 0.03% but by multiplying the number of claimants by average weekly award an overall weekly LHA cost decrease of 0.9% (£2,194) can be estimated. Figure 1 shows how average costs have changed over this period by dwelling size.

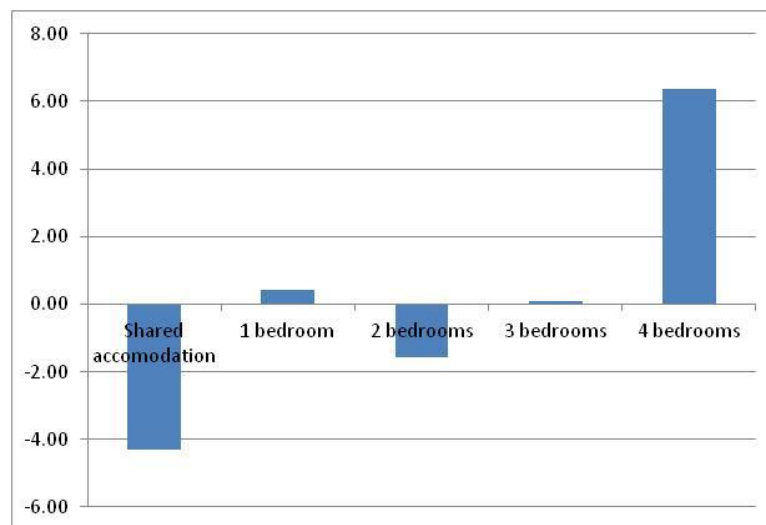


Figure 1: Change in weekly LHA costs

Housing Market



Ministry of Justice data shows that in the Darlington LA area, social landlord possession claims in the first two quarters of 2013 stood at 78. This compares to 82 claims in the corresponding timeframe in 2012 – a 4.9% decrease. Landlord possessions stood at 19 compared to 13 in the corresponding timeframe. In the private sector (rented and mortgage), while claims remained constant at 97, possessions fell by 22.2%.



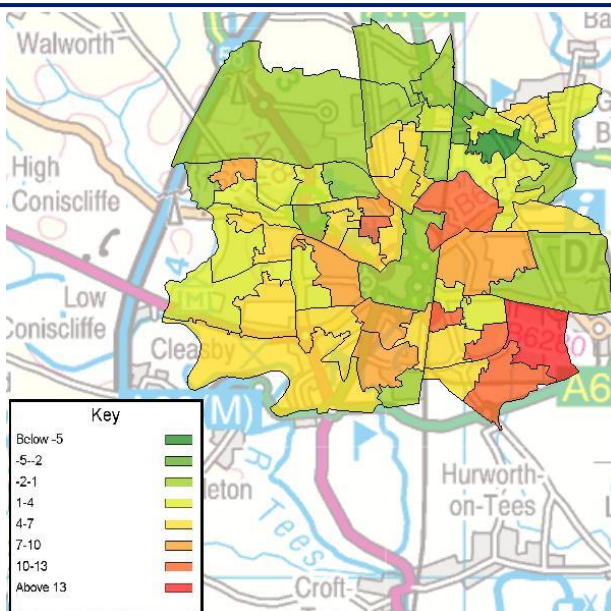
According to ONS figures, the population in the constituency grew by 4.1% from 87,373 in 2010 to 90,976 in 2011. The map below shows the population change by lower super output area and that the greatest population increase has taken place in the LSOA covered by the Eastbourne ward (13.3%) and parts of Haughton West ward have seen greatest decrease (-6.8%) (note: data is not available for some LSOAs in 2011).



Despite this overall population increase, CORE data shows that social housing lettings have fallen in Darlington LA area from 976 in 2011/12 to 942 in 2012/13 – a decrease of 3.5%. This compares to an overall decrease of 5.2% in Tees Valley.



In the year ending in March 2013, there were 622 decisions made by the planning authority in Darlington. Some 52 of these (8.4%) were regarding developments for housing. This represents 16% of all housing-related decisions in Tees Valley.



Map 1: Percentage change in population

If you have any queries regarding the content of the APPG briefings, please contact:
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